



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG
Councillor Nomoya D Mnisi
Member of the Mayoral Committee
Department of Economic Development

MEDIA STATEMENT

MMC MNISI LED A TOUR TO JOBURG'S FIRST R27-BILLION BIODIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT

03rd NOVEMBER 2023

The Member of the Mayoral Committee for Economic Development, Cllr Nomoya Mnisi today led a tour to the Southern Farms development.

Southern Farms, the R27-billion first biodiversity development which is about 4000 hectare is expected to be launched before the end of this year. This bio-diversity development will see much needed housing, economic opportunities that will create jobs, SMME opportunities and training opportunities in the city.

Southern Farms is located south of the existing suburbs of Naturena, west of Kibler Park, east of Lenasia and Lehae, and is abutted by the N1 and N12 National Highways. The N1 divides the project area into two distinctive quadrants, namely the area to the west of the N1 and the area to the east of the N1. The project area is also bordered by the N12 Highway forming the north-western boundary of the project area.

The Southern Farms area was originally operated by Johannesburg Water for their wastewater treatment works, however, with changes in technology, smaller portions of land are being utilized, leaving vacant farms exposed to land invasion and illegal land-use activities.

In 2006, Johannesburg Water indicated its intention to manage only the areas developed for their operations, made allowances for some extensions, and handed over the remaining properties to JPC, to manage in terms of their mandate. The city took a strategic decision to intervene in the Southern Farms area by protecting the environmentally sensitive properties, but at the same time had to address the various needs of the communities surrounding Southern Farms.

It was proposed that the city investigate a model where the environmentally sensitive areas could be protected sustainably, whilst land that could be developed was identified to alleviate poverty and the critical housing shortage in the area. This however needed to be done with a sustainability approach as a goal – where both the environmental needs and the needs of the city are addressed. Council first approved the initiative in 2013 to start with the studies that needed to be done. In 2018, Council approved the Business Plan after the studies were undertaken.

MMC Mnisi said, “The key challenge facing developing regions is the need to respond to the population and economic growth whilst managing the impacts to the environment. By addressing environmental social and economic factors through long-term strategic planning, these pressures can be addressed in an effective and positive way”.

She added, “Accordingly, a Regional Sustainable Development Programme is envisaged for the Southern Farms area. This programme must work to promote a holistic approach to the planning and development of this area. The programme must protect matters of environmental significance, whilst meeting the challenges of population and economic growth in a balanced and shared manner”.

Ends

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